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Commission on the Status of Women
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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women: implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern

Botswana, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Kenya*, Morocco, Namibia, Panama*, Peru, Philippines*, Rwanda, Senegal, Thailand, Ukraine, Venezuela and Zambia*: revised draft resolution

Women and mental health, with emphasis on special groups

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Reaffirming the commitments made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women[1] that women have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health,

Recalling that the Platform for Action, in the critical area on women and health,[2] included women's mental health on the agenda for women's empowerment, by asserting that health was a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being; women had the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; health and well-being eluded the majority of women; and one of the major barriers for women to the achievement of the highest attainable standard of health was gender-based inequality,

Upholding the importance of attaining full mental health for all people, as recognized in General Assembly resolution 46/119 of 17 December 1991, entitled "The protection of persons with mental illness and the improvement of mental health care",

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* In accordance with rule 69 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] Ibid., annex II, para. 89.

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Welcoming the strong commitments to women and mental health made by the Director General of the World Health Organization at the forty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Concerned that, in many parts of the world, depression affects more women than men, owing, among other factors, to the inferior social and economic status of women and girls,

Concerned also that women throughout their life cycle experience tremendous health burdens created by gender discrimination: all forms of violence, including domestic and sexual violence; lack of appropriate physical and mental health care, nutrition and education or access to them; high rates of illiteracy; and the stress of multiple and conflicting roles,

Acknowledging that special attention must be given to the mental health needs of women, including those who are marginalized because of, *inter alia*, race, ethnicity, religion, age, social and economic status, physical and/or mental disability, exploitative commercial sex, displacement, migration and HIV/AIDS,

1. *Calls* for the urgent implementation of the health objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and other relevant international agreements with the integration of mental health as a priority issue;

2. *Requests* Governments to include in their national policies and/or plans of action for women specific measures that would address the mental health needs of women and girls, especially the need for psychosocial care and counselling services;

3. *Calls upon* Governments to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in mental health care, where it exists, and to provide access to appropriate treatment that is responsive to women's mental health needs at all ages;

4. *Invites* Governments to develop and implement public awareness campaigns on mental health and education focusing on women and girls who are most in need of psychological support;

5. *Also invites* Governments and other relevant actors, as appropriate, to provide or enhance mental health education and both pre-service and in-service training to primary health care workers, social service professionals, teachers and other educators, and community workers;

6. *Encourages* non-governmental organizations, private funding institutions and individual donors to organize and support assistance programmes and missions tailored to the needs of areas where psychological/psychiatric problems are prevalent among the population, in particular among poor urban and rural women, with a view to providing not only primary treatment but also training for family members and/or other persons who may take over the care of the afflicted persons;

7. *Requests* the relevant United Nations bodies, in collaboration with relevant agencies, to address and support the mental health needs of women and girls through various measures and projects;

8. *Invites* the World Health Organization, in partnership with other relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, and through extrabudgetary resources, to develop and disseminate a training manual designed to provide primary health care workers, social service professionals, and other community workers with the appropriate skills for assisting women and girls who are experiencing problems and mental disorders as a result of trauma, all forms of discrimination, exploitation, abuse and oppression;

9. *Urges* the Secretary-General, in collaboration with relevant United Nations bodies, to organize, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, regional expert

group meetings with a view to developing gender- and age-disaggregated and gender-sensitive psychosocial and mental health situation analyses and indicators as bases for determining progress in women's and girls' emotional well-being and mental health;

10. *Invites* concerned non-governmental organizations, funding sources and the private sector, in coordination with national authorities concerned, to support and develop a programme that will bring a wide range of expertise and proven interventions, including alternative community-based services, to the training of local community workers, teachers and primary health care staff and to provide appropriate interventions for stress-related disorders to girls and women in crisis;

11. *Decides* to include in the framework of the review process for the special session of the General Assembly to appraise and assess progress achieved in implementation of the Beijing Programme for Action the emerging issue of the mental health of girls and women, so that further initiatives and action can be undertaken;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring this resolution to the attention of the relevant bodies of the United Nations;

13. *Invites* States Members and United Nations agencies concerned to make available, for the above purpose, existing measures relevant to the present resolution, and/or taken to implement it, for consideration by the Commission at its forty-fourth session.